

OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS RENDERED BY THE INTER- NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

Edited by

FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.

Secretary to the Commission

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OPINION 379

Designation under the Plenary Powers of a type species
in harmony with accustomed usage for the genus *Sphinx*
Linnaeus, 1758 (Class Insecta, Order Lepidoptera)

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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

COMPOSITION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE RULING GIVEN IN OPINION 379

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Vice-President : Senhor Dr. Afranio do Amaral (*Sao Paulo, Brazil*) (12th August 1953)

Secretary : Mr. Francis Hemming (*London, England*) (27th July 1948)

B. The Members of the Commission

(Arranged in order of precedence by reference to date of election or of most recent re-election, as prescribed by the International Congress of Zoology)

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Professor Harold E. VOKES (*Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.*) (12th August 1953)

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Dr. Norman R. STOLL (*Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.*) (12th August 1953)

Mr. P. C. SYLVESTER-BRADLEY (*Sheffield University, Sheffield, England*) (12th August 1953)

Dr. L. B. HOLTHUIS (*Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, The Netherlands*) (12th August 1953)

OPINION 379

DESIGNATION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF A TYPE SPECIES IN HARMONY WITH ACCUSTOMED USAGE FOR THE GENUS "SPHINX" LINNAEUS, 1758 (CLASS INSECTA, ORDER LEPIDOPTERA)

RULING :—(1) Under the Plenary Powers, (a) all selections of type species for the genus *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758 (Class Insecta, Order Lepidoptera), made prior to the present Ruling, are hereby set aside, and (b) the nominal species *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758, is hereby designated to be the type species of the foregoing genus.

(2) The under-mentioned generic name is hereby placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* with the Name No. 905 :—*Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758 (gender : feminine) (type species, by designation under the Plenary Powers under (1)(b) above : *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758) (Class Insecta, Order Lepidoptera).

(3) The under-mentioned specific name is hereby placed on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* with the Name No. 526 :—*ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the combination *Sphinx ligustri* (specific name of type species of *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758).

I. THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On 8th February 1947, Dr. Jiří Paclt (then of *Národní Museum v Praze, Prague, Czechoslovakia* and now of *Bratislava, Czechoslovakia*) submitted an application asking the Commission to use its Plenary Powers for the purpose of designating for the genus *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758, a type species in harmony with accustomed usage. The present was one of the applications which, owing

to the pressure of work in connection with proposals for the reform of the *Règles* and the small amount of time available for considering individual cases, it was necessary for the Commission at its Session held in Paris in 1948 to postpone for later consideration. For a period of some eighteen months immediately following the close of the Paris Session the entire resources of the Office of the Commission were concentrated upon the preparation and publication of the Official Records of that Session and it was not until the latter part of 1950 that it was possible to resume work on the preparation of applications relating to individual nomenclatorial problems for publication in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*. Even when this stage was reached, some further delay was unavoidable, for, in consequence of certain Directives given to the Commission by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948, regarding the scope and content of *Opinions*, a certain amount of revision was necessary in the case of all applications outstanding at that time. In the present case these adjustments were completed by 14th July 1952, on which date the following revised application was submitted to the Commission by Dr. Paclt :—

**Proposed use of the Plenary Powers to designate a type species
for “*Sphinx*” Linnaeus, 1758 (Class Insecta, Order
Lepidoptera) in harmony with accustomed usage**

By JIRÍ PACLT

(Bratislava, Czechoslovakia)

The generic name *Sphinx* was published in 1758 by Linnaeus (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 489), by whom it was applied to those moths (the Hawkmoths) which he regarded as generically distinct from the rest of the moths, which he placed in the genus *Phalaena*.

2. Stephens in 1828 (*Ill. Brit. Ins.*, Haust. 1 : 121) selected *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758 (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 489) to be the type species of this important genus, and this selection was later repeated by Westwood & Humphreys (1843, *Brit. Moths* 1 : 13).*

* It should be noted that some authors have argued that *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758, became the type species of *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758, by tautonymy, through the action taken by Linnaeus in 1761 (*Faun. svec.* (ed. 2) : 287), but this argument is unacceptable, for the principle of tautonymy is applicable only on the first publication of a name.

3. With very few exceptions, entomologists ever since Stephens' day have accepted *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus as the type species of this genus. It is unfortunate therefore that Stephens' selection of this species is antedated by that by Latreille who in 1810 (*Consid. gên. Crust. Arachn. Ins.* : 440) selected *Sphinx euphorbiae* Linnaeus, 1758 (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 492) to be the type species. No author since Latreille has accepted this species as the type species of *Sphinx* Linnaeus or has placed it in that genus, *sensu stricto*.

4. I am of the opinion that it would be highly undesirable to disturb the use of the name *Sphinx* Linnaeus for *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus and its congeners, having regard to the facts that :—(1) with very few exceptions the generic name *Sphinx* Linnaeus has been uniformly used for *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus and great confusion would result if it were necessary to abandon this practice ; (2) the application of the ordinary rules in this case would involve a confusing transfer of the name *Sphinx* Linnaeus to the genus to which *Sphinx euphorbiae* Linnaeus is referred, thus displacing the name *Celerio* Oken, 1815, a name which has for a long time been applied to that genus.

5. I accordingly ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature :—

- (1) to use its Plenary Powers (a) to set aside all type selections for the genus *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758, made prior to the decision now proposed to be made, and (b), having done so, to designate *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758, to be the type species of that genus ;
- (2) to place the name *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758 (gender of generic name : feminine), with the type species specified in (1) above, on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* ;
- (3) to place the trivial name *ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the combination *Sphinx ligustri*, on the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology*.

II. THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

2. **Registration of the present application :** Upon the receipt of Dr. Paclt's application, the question of the use of the Plenary Powers for the purpose of varying the type species of the genus

Sphinx Linnaeus, 1758, was allotted the Registered Number Z.N.(S.) 280.

3. Publication of the present application : The present application was sent to the printer on 15th July 1952 and on 29th August of that year was published in Part 10 of volume 6 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* (Paclt, 1952, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 6 : 291).

4. Issue of Public Notices : Under the revised procedure prescribed by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 4 : 51—56), Public Notice of the possible use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its Plenary Powers in the present case was given on 29th August 1952, (a) in Part 10 of volume 6 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* (the Part in which Dr. Paclt's application was published) and (b) to the other prescribed serial publications. In addition, Notice was given to certain general zoological serial publications and to a number of entomological serials in Europe and America.

5. Comments received : The issue of the Public Notices specified in paragraph 4 above elicited a joint comment from Dr. J. G. Franclemont and Dr. Wm. T. M. Forbes (*Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., U.S.A.*), both of whom supported Dr. Paclt's proposals. The communication so received is reproduced in the immediately following paragraph. No objection to the action proposed was received from any source.

6. Support received from Dr. J. G. Franclemont and Dr. Wm. T. M. Forbes (*Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., U.S.A.*) : On 18th September 1952, Dr. J. G. Franclemont (then of the *United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.*) wrote a letter to the Commission pointing out that, contrary to the statement in the application submitted in this case, Stephens (1828) did not select a type species for the genus *Sphinx* Linnaeus and that the first author to select *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus to be the type species of this genus was Curtis (1828). On 22nd November

1952, Dr. Franclemont (who had now moved to *Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., U.S.A.*) addressed a further communication to the Commission indicating his support and that of Dr. Wm. T. M. Forbes (*Cornell University*) for the action proposed in this case. Dr. Franclemont's letter of 18th September 1952 was published in December 1952 (Franclemont, 1952, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 9 : 144). It is not however reproduced here because the point made in that letter was made again in the communication which he submitted on 22nd November 1952 on behalf of Dr. Forbes and himself. That communication was as follows :—

Dr. Forbes and I agree that the Commission should fix *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758, as the type species of the genus *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758 ; this species has been the traditional type of the genus. However, it was Curtis, not Stephens, who designated *Sphinx ligustri* Linnaeus, 1758 as the type species of *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758, in January 1828 (*British Entomology* 5 : 195). It should be pointed out that Rothschild and Jordan in their revision of the family SPHINGIDAE considered *Sphinx ocellata* Linnaeus, 1758, as the type species of *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758 ; this was the result of the application of the "first species rule". Dr. Paclt is correct, insofar as we can determine, in stating that no one followed Latreille's 1810 selection of *Sphinx euphorbiae* Linnaeus, 1758, as the type species of *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758.

III. THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

7. Issue of Voting Paper V.P.(54)41 : On 24th March 1954, a Voting Paper (V.P.(54)41) was issued in which the Members of the Commission were invited to vote either for, or against, "the proposal relating to the name *Sphinx* Linnaeus, 1758, set out in paragraph 5 on page 291 of volume 6 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*" [i.e. in paragraph 5 of the application reproduced in the first paragraph of the present *Opinion*].

8. The Prescribed Voting Period : As the foregoing Voting Paper was issued under the Three-Month Rule, the Prescribed Voting Period closed on 24th June 1954.

9. Particulars of the Voting on Voting Paper V.P.(54)41 : At the close of the Prescribed Voting Period, the state of the voting on Voting Paper V.P.(54)41 was as follows :—

(a) *Affirmative Votes had been given by the following nineteen (19) Commissioners (arranged in the order in which Votes were received) :*

Riley ; Holthuis ; Lemche ; Hering ; Vokes ; Bonnet ;
Dymond ; Esaki ; Mertens ; Boschma ; Jaczewski ;
Sylvester-Bradley ; Bradley (J.C.) ; Hankó ; do Amaral ;
Hemming ; Pearson ; Stoll ; Cabrera ;

(b) *Negative Votes :*

None ;

(c) *Voting Papers not returned :*

None.

10. Declaration of Result of Vote : On 26th June 1954, Mr. Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission, acting as Returning Officer for the Vote taken on Voting Paper V.P.(54)41, signed a Certificate that the Votes cast were as set out in paragraph 9 above and declaring that the proposal submitted in the foregoing Voting Paper had been duly adopted and that the decision so taken was the decision of the International Commission in the matter aforesaid.

11. Preparation of the Ruling given in the present “ Opinion ” : On 29th March 1955, Mr. Hemming prepared the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* and at the same time signed a Certificate that the terms of that Ruling were in complete accord with those of the proposal approved by the International Commission in its Vote on Voting Paper V.P.(54)41.

12. Original References : The following are the original references for the names placed on *Official Lists* by the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* :—

ligustri, *Sphinx*, Linnaeus, 1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 489

Sphinx Linnaeus, 1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 489

13. Family-Group-name aspects : The application dealt with in the present *Opinion* was published in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* prior to the establishment of the *Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology* by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology, Copenhagen, 1953. It has been ascertained that an addition to the foregoing *Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology* will need to be made in order to complete the action, which, under the General Directives given to the International Commission by the International Congress of Zoology, is required to be taken in the present case. This question is now being examined on a separate File to which the Registered Number Z.N.(G.) 125 has been allotted.

14. At the time of the submission of the present application the name applicable to the second portion of a binomen was "trivial name". This was altered to "specific name" by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology, Copenhagen, 1953, which at the same time made corresponding changes in the titles of the *Official List* and *Official Index* of names of this category. These changes in terminology have been incorporated in the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*.

15. The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in dealing with the present case, and the present *Opinion* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

16. The present *Opinion* shall be known as *Opinion* Three Hundred and Seventy-Nine (379) of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London, this Twenty-Ninth day of March, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Five.

*Secretary to the International Commission
on Zoological Nomenclature*

FRANCIS HEMMING

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

The publication of this volume will be complete on the issue of two further Parts. The first of these (Part 30) will, it is proposed, contain a "Direction" embodying decisions by the International Commission in regard to family-group-name problems arising in connection with generic names dealt with in "Opinions" included in the present volume. Part 31 will contain the Title Page and Table of Contents of the present volume, together with the authors' and subject indexes.